1/17/72

Dear Bud,

Had it not been for other things, like the Lattimer business, and much company, I would have raised this with you earlier. I have known for a week or more than the Frank book is going to be offered by three book clubs. Doubleday has an enormous investment in it, beginning with the 6-figure advance to Frank. Their own, the Book Find (I may be wrong here) and the Playboo book clubs. If it is important I can dig the third out. This represents the intent of putting some real stem into the engine.

I also ask you to note that the serialization of the Biship flop at this point is exceptional. Usually, serialization precedes or coincides with publication. It does not usually follow by so great a time. Abd I do not know of another single case (which does not mean that there are none) where a real, guaranteed-by-performance flop was serialized with its established commercial and literary failure. The Post is not alone in serializing it. I don't know who all is, but in Phila the Inquirer is.

The timing with Lattimer may be irrelevant, but it sure as hell is perfect.

Now there is no way that the Frank book can be really promoted without running into the FCC's regulations and their capability for working for us. Therefore, although I am not at all happy at the prospect and would prefer almost anything else, I propose that we prepare for it in ways I would like to explore with you at greater length when we have time, but essentially by Ray writing me a latter in which he says he has read my book, knows from their efforts to entice him by bribery into talking to them what other writers have in mind saying about him, that he is both a man without much formal education, a prisoner and inhibited by the fact that his case is on appeal and he thereby may be precluded from saying anything publicly so, while it should not be taken as either approval or disapproval of my work, on which he feels he should not make comment, he would like me to represent him in presenting the other side, giving my views, not his, with the one exception that he has never been asked if he killed Dr. King and he authorizes me to say in his behalf two things: that Foreman never asked him, merely assumed that he was the shooter; and that he was not the shooter and was not in any waybresponsible for the killing.

With this letter, I would then write Doubleday and ask that in fairness to Ray, who is without means, they inform each and every outlet to which they supply Frank or on which he appears and to communicate to them my availability to appear with or following Frank, and that if such an assurance is not immediately forthcoming I will not await the one-sided airing on a matter so vital to the nation and its system of justice but will approach the FCC, even though there will then be no licensee through whom to make complaint, and that I think the media record of the past on this subject should be enough to warrant their interest. That I will also write every network, every major talk show, etc., also in advance of the appearance (April when I heard of it) of Frank's show and tell them if ~~xxxxxxx~~ it is not arranged for me to appear with him or in response, I will in each case take the case to the FCC. It would be much better if we could have some arrangement for legal help in advance. This can provide us with the intellectual judo we have needed. They have this enormlus stake. If they argue that Frank has asked to see Ray and that Ray has refused, that is no answer, for Ray has a case in court and Frank has made his position clear in advance, in many ways, only one of which is the use of Ruie's material (I have this in writing). There may be people interestedx enough in the fairness doctrine to be willing to try this unique and I think new approach. With such help, even failure could be success.

Hastily,